

# In-patient volume steady at hospital during October

In-patient volume at the hospital was consistently up in October. Administrator Les Lacy told the Cheyenne County Hospital Board at the Oct. 24 meeting that the hospital has continued to be very busy averaging nine to 10 patients daily.

Traci Neitzel, board member, asked about the maximum number of patients in the hospital. Administrator Lacy said the hospital is licensed for 16 beds. When the hospital begins taking obstetric patients, it may bring up some other issues but these patients will only be in the hospital for two to three days.

Mrs. Neitzel asked how the administrator adjusts the staff for the slower times vs the busy times. The administrator said that when the hospital has low patient numbers, the staff may volunteer or be asked to take "low-census" days.

However he indicated that there is a limit to how many low-census days employees can take without needing to seek other sources of income. Using more certified nurses' aides during the busier times helps which is one reason the hospital is currently looking for two aide positions and then one experienced registered nurse who can assist with obstetrics and in the emergency room.

Dr. Rebecca Allard, who will be coming to practice at the hospital in 2007, has recently worked in the clinic and saw inpatients. The administrator said she was received very well by staff and patients.

The statistics were reviewed and the volume for the providers and clinic has been steady. Administrator Lacy reported that a "Docs Who Care" physician will be at the hospital to help the providers.

The administrator said the average length of patient stay is climbing which is good. The physical therapy numbers are the best they have been in the last five years.

The County Health report was reviewed. The report showed a steady volume of patients and a variety of activities which are reaching all areas of the communities.

## Memorial garden

Contractor Troy Porter gave a proposal on the landscaping in the back of the hospital. This proposal included grading all areas for drainage, installing fabric barrier and approximately 100 ton of fractured granite to a depth of 3-4 inches and place four or five moss

rock boulders for soil erosion and beauty.

Mrs. Neitzel suggested making the area into a "memory garden" and using some memorial money to put in a bench. After some discussion it was decided that the administrator would write a request for a proposal with Mrs. Neitzel's help to get more bids.

The proposal would include a part that if a county business had a bid and was a certain percent higher than out-of-county bids, the board had the option to stay in the county. This proposal would include 50 shrubs or grasses to control erosion and would be easy to maintain plus be attractive.

## Fire marshal

The Kansas State Fire Marshal was at the hospital and left with several deficiencies. The three broad categories the deficiencies fit into are:

1) Fire caulking and smoke sealing issues - these have been referred to the involved contractors.

2) Documentation issues - these relate chiefly to the inspector wanting the hospital to use new forms that were made available by the fire marshal's office during the inspection.

3) A pre-existing, non-conforming condition at the east basement exit - discussions are now underway with the architect and the fire marshal's office.

In the event that the discussions between the architect and the fire marshal are not able to get the pre-existing, non-conforming condition at the east basement exit grandfathered, the administrator has indicated that he and the hospital maintenance person can repair the condition with an in-house project.

## Equipment

Administrator Lacy presented a bid on a new anesthesia machine. This is the model preferred by Kim Zwegardt, the hospital's certified registered nurse anesthetist, and is the same machine Dundy County Hospital administration recently purchased. The VHA contract price is \$39,631, the monitor is \$12,729 and a 3-year contract is \$2,131 for a total of \$54,491. This will be paid with by funded depreciation. The board agreed to purchase the anesthesia machine. This purchase was not on the capital equipment budget for this year.

A bid for a new phone system to replace the obsolete 10-year-old system was presented. All re-

placement parts for the current system are refurbished parts and the system is unable to expand further.

The bid for \$44,494 was accepted by the board and will also be paid for with funded depreciation. Neither the phone system purchase nor the new anesthesia machine are in the capital equipment budget for this year.

## Director's report

Great Plains Health Alliance report was given by Jackie John, area director. She said the hospitals in the Great Plains Health Alliance network have joined the Quality Health Indicator Benchmarking Project starting this month. This project will help Critical Access Hospitals collect, track and trend data that is pertinent to their unique environment and to participate in a nationally recognized initiatives that demonstrates health care quality in rural America. It will also give them the opportunity to benchmark their quality against other Great Plains Health Alliance facilities and other participating facilities in Kansas.

## In other business

In other business:

- The administrator reviewed the mission, vision and values of the facility and staff. It was decided that the board members would take the survey's home and do the short survey and bring it back to the next meeting.

- The heating for the concrete in the front and back of the hospital is not done but should be completed soon.

- The lab system which is up and running is still undergoing several issues.

## Next meeting

The next meeting was moved to 3 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 30, in the Cheyenne County Clinic basement meeting room in St. Francis.

*Editor's note: The above article was taken from the unapproved Oct. 24 Cheyenne County Hospital Board minutes.*

## -Interesting Facts-

- The wood stork, also known as the wood ibis, is the only true stork native to the United States.

- The first holes-in-one scored by both a father and son in the same game of golf were shot by Charles H. Calhoun Sr. and Jr. on August 24, 1932.

- Prior to Cornelius Vanderbilt's donation of \$1 million in 1873 Vanderbilt University was known as Central University.



CRAFT FAIR was held Saturday with the weather turning out to be sunny. Above Rachel Davis and her sister Reba Raile enjoyed the beautiful quilts on display.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

# Physical therapist reviews happenings in department

Shara Johnson, physical therapist, told the Cheyenne County Hospital Board what was happening in her department when they met on Oct. 24.

The construction of the new physical therapy department was completed in the four and one-half years she has been with the hospital. Mrs. Johnson said she now feels more involved with the staff and the patients as they are all in one area instead of down the hall in several different rooms.

The pool was up and going by the middle of July. The pool days are scheduled on Tuesday and Thursday and most patients still have land therapy, too. The staff works with patients for knees, hips and shoulders problems.

One unit is equal to 15 minutes. In the month of July there were 20 units; August, 95 units; September, 74 units; and October, 50 units (which is

not the complete month of October). The total was 239 units which translates into \$12,356.

Mrs. Johnson said the volume is unpredictable and, for now, the staffing, Sara Houtman and JoAnn Klie, is fine. The next anticipated staffing challenge will be replacing Mrs. Klie when she retires.

She said patient lifts in rooms would need to be evaluated a few rooms vs. all rooms to install the lifts. This would reduce the risk of injury to patients and staff.

Mrs. Johnson said that an orthopedic surgeon would be a nice addition to the specialty clinic. One has been identified. A letter and CD including pictures of the physical therapy area

and the computerized radiology were sent to the surgeon who is with Western Orthopedics.

Shawna Blanka, administrative secretary, read a note from Heather McDonald with S&T Communications. Ms. McDonald was at the hospital when it was filmed for the television commercials.

She sent an e-mail telling how impressed she was with the facility and, had she known how efficient and up-to-date the department was when she needed physical therapy in May, she would have had her therapy in St. Francis.

"The Cheyenne County Hospital is definitely one of the nicest places I've seen in the area for all areas of treatment," she wrote.



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